

## Tuition bill moves to Senate floor

SSB 6562, allowing the governing boards of the University of Washington, Washington State University, and Western Washington University greater latitude in tuition-setting authority, was advanced to the Senate floor on Thursday. If passed, it will be sent to the House prior to the Feb. 16 bill cutoff deadline. While it could be revised on the Senate floor, the bill currently has three basic provisions:

### 1. Tuition Increases

It establishes a new ceiling on tuition increases by allowing the UW, WSU and WWU governing boards to set annual tuition rates **during the period 2011-12 through 2017-18**, that do not exceed the lesser of the following two options:

- 14 percent in any year
- A compounded annual average of 9 percent calculated over the previous 15 years

The tuition increases would only be allowed in years when the State Need Grant covers at least the same percentage of undergraduate tuition as in 2009-10. In addition, tuition may not exceed the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of peer institutions in the Global Challenge States: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Virginia.

Senate Committee staff provided analysis of how tuition might grow under the new limits. One alternative showed the total cost of tuition at the UW would rise 52 percent between 2010-11 and 2015-16. This would be in addition to the 14 percent increase in the current academic year or a total of 66 percent over 7 years, an annual average increase of 9.4 percent.

### 2. Performance Agreements

The authority to raise tuition in this manner is extended contingent on annual approval by the state committee on higher education performance of a six-year performance agreement between the state and institutions that includes measurable benchmarks and goals covering degree production, timely student progress, cost and quality of degrees, recruitment and retention of diverse student body and staff, and state tuition funding needed.

### 3. Tuition Waivers

The bill also would establish a new system of tuition waivers in lieu of certain institutional financial aid that current law requires. The current requirement for institutions to set aside 3.5 percent for institutional financial aid would be reduced by the dollar value of the waivers.

Students from families of four with an income of up to \$39,000 would be granted a full tuition waiver (after subtracting the amount of state and federal non-loan financial aid available to the student); those with incomes up to \$58,500 would receive a 75 percent tuition waiver; those with incomes up to \$78,000 would receive a 50 percent tuition waiver if tuition reaches 13.5 percent of median family income for a family of four.

### Effect on Financial Aid

Senate Committee staff estimate the increased cost to maintain the state policy of increasing financial aid for its neediest students to offset the effects of tuition increases would be \$6 million.

### Effect on GET

Legislative staff determined that future tuition increases posed by the bill were unlikely to threaten the solvency of the GET program. However, there is some potential that the price of GET units would need to increase so much that the program could become significantly less affordable to the public.

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## Low-cost student loan bill moves out of House Rules

A House bill that continues to lay groundwork for a self-sustaining program of low-cost student loans, conditional scholarships or other financial assistance is awaiting action on the House floor.

On Tuesday, SHB 2854 was amended in the House Ways & Means Committee to clarify that the state will not borrow money to fund the program.

The bill establishes the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP) account as a repository for money used to fund low-cost loans, scholarships or other financial assistance for low- and middle-income college students. Money in the account could come from legislative appropriations, private sources or participant repayments.

If this bill passes, supporters of the legislation say the next step will be to establish the necessary funding to make the program self-sustaining.

The bill's prime sponsor, Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney, D-Seattle, said the program will help low- and middle-income students avoid years of debt following college graduation.

Rep. Joe Schmick, R-Colfax, who voted against the bill in committee, disagreed with the bill's eligibility cutoff for the HELP program at 130 percent of median family income. "I think this broadens the scope of this way too far," Schmick said.

## House passes bill authorizing higher ed group purchases

A bill designed to save the state money by giving higher education institutions authority to make group purchases of materials, supplies, services and equipment passed the House Thursday by a 97-0 vote.

HB 2858 would give Washington institutions the same flexibility that colleges in many other states have to create such purchasing consortia. Institutions could then save money as a result of their combined purchasing power.

The bill has tentatively been scheduled for a public hearing in the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

## HECB seeks changes to key legislation on teacher prep

The HECB is seeking an amendment to a K-12 teacher preparation bill that would establish an alternative process for determining whether some community colleges can offer four-year teaching degrees.

Such an amendment, if passed on the floor of the House, would make 2SHB 3059 consistent with other pending legislation that incorporates recommendations from the System Design Plan.

The System Design Plan, which was developed by the HECB in collaboration with a wide spectrum of the higher education community, proposes a new framework for making decisions on future expansion of the state's higher education system.

Under a provision contained in 2SHB 3059, which was sent to the House Rules Committee on Tuesday, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges would be required to select up to three community colleges to develop and offer a program of study leading to a baccalaureate degree with a residency teaching certificate in subject areas where teacher shortages exist.

The amendment sought by the HECB would make the determination concerning potential baccalaureate degrees at community colleges subject to a review and approval process consistent with recommendations in the System Design Plan. That process is included in SHB 2655, which is now in the House Rules Committee. A companion bill, SSB 6355, passed in the Senate on Friday.

The HECB supports other current provisions of 2SHB 3059, which is one of three key pieces of K-12 legislation sought by the Governor. Supporters say the bill will remove barriers in teacher education and help strengthen teaching practices. The legislation also is designed to improve the state's chances of receiving Race to the Top funds from the federal government.

### Next week's schedule:

- **Tuesday Feb. 16:** Last day to consider bills in house of origin.

## Bills delivered to Governor

- [ESHB 2921](#) – Capturing additional savings.
- [SHB 2998](#) – Suspending certain monetary awards and salary increases.
- [SSB 6382](#) – Reducing the cost of state government operations by restricting compensation.

## Bills on House Floor:

- [2SHB 2630](#) – Creating the opportunity to express program.
- [HB 2638](#) – Regarding instructional materials provided in a specialized format.
- [SHB 2683](#) – Changing provisions of the economic development council.
- [HB 2694](#) – Regarding a bachelor of science in nursing program at the University Center.
- [SHB 2852](#) – Concerning college-level online learning by high school students.
- [SHB 2854](#) – Making changes to the state higher education loan program.
- [HB 2858](#) – Regarding the purchasing authority of institutions of higher education.
- [SHB 2930](#) – Expanding the pool of qualified teachers.
- [HB 2973](#) – Creating resident student classifications for certain members of the military and their spouses and dependents.
- [HB 3068](#) – Providing access to alternative routes to certification for the recruiting Washington teachers program.
- [2SHB 3141](#) – Redesigning the delivery of temporary assistance to needy families.
- [SSB 6503](#) – Closing state agencies on specified dates.

## Bills on Senate Floor

- [SSB 5376](#) – Requiring the higher education coordinating board to develop a grant program to encourage training for students studying in the medical field to work with individuals with disabilities.
- [ESSB 5555](#) – Regarding lifelong learning accounts.
- [SSB 6355](#) – Expanding the higher education system upon proven demand.
- [SSB 6357](#) – Requiring policies for academic recognition of certain life and learning experiences.
- [SSB 6359](#) – Promoting efficiencies including institutional coordination and partnerships in the community and technical college system.

- [SB 6467](#) – Authorizing honorary degrees for students who were ordered into internment camps.
- [2SSB 6562](#) – Regarding tuition-setting authority at institutions of higher education.
- [SB 6678](#) – Concerning the creation of entities to address the long-range impact of opportunities and changes in the aerospace industry.
- [SB 6703](#) – Regarding online nursing programs.
- [SSB 6706](#) – Concerning the commercialization of research at state universities.
- [SSB 6778](#) – Establishing an alternative route to a high school diploma.

## Bills in House Rules

- [SHB 1545](#) – Authorizing the higher education Coordinating Board to offer higher education annuities and retirement income plans.
- [SHB 2580](#) – Concerning secondary career and technical education courses.
- [SHB 2634](#) – Promoting efficiencies including institutional coordination and partnerships in the community and technical college system.
- [SHB 2655](#) – Expanding higher education system upon proven demand.
- [SHB 2979](#) – Regarding higher education performance agreements.
- [2SHB 3059](#) – Expanding options for educator preparation.

## Bills in Senate Rules

- [2SSB 5176](#) – Creating a bi-state partnership for teachers of children with visual impairments.
- [SSB 5237](#) – Requiring the development of three-year baccalaureate programs.
- [SB 6413](#) – Regarding the purchasing authority of institutions of higher education.
- [SB 6533](#) – Granting high school credit for learning experiences.
- [2SSB 6579](#) – Improving the efficiency, accountability, and quality within state information systems.
- [SSB 6662](#) – Regarding developing a curriculum for a career track for home care aides.
- [SSB 6727](#) – Concerning health sciences and services authorities.
- [SSB 6790](#) – Providing regional economic development services.

## Bills in Senate Committee

- [SHB 2684](#) – Establishing opportunity centers at community colleges
- [SB 6364](#) – Concerning the capital budget.
- [SB 6444](#) – Making 2010 operating supplemental appropriations.

## Bills in House committee

- [HB 2824](#) – Making 2010 operating supplemental appropriations.
- [HB 2836](#) – Concerning the capital budget.
- [ESSB 6426](#) – Eliminating certain boards and commissions
- [E2SSB 6696](#) – Regarding education reform.
- [ESSB 6805](#) – Concerning Washington state economic development commission.